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Letter dated 27 September 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General*

I have the honour to enclose herewith a comment by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine on the thematic report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights entitled "Situation of human rights in the temporarily occupied Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol (Ukraine)" (see annex).

I would appreciate your kind assistance in having the present letter and its annex distributed as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 72 (c), and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Volodymyr **Yelchenko**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Comment of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine on the thematic report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights entitled "Situation of human rights in the temporarily occupied Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol (Ukraine)"

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine welcomes the thematic report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights "Situation of human rights in the temporarily occupied Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol (Ukraine)" launched on September 25. This report is a result of the hard fact finding work on the systematic violations of human rights by the Russian Federation in the illegally occupied Crimea, the logical summarizing and generalization of human rights violations recorded and documented by OHCHR during the period from February 2014 to September 2017.

The scale of internationally wrongful acts and human rights violations committed by the Russian occupation authorities in the Crimea prove that the Russian Federation blatantly violates its international legal obligations under The Hague and Geneva Conventions. In addition to the facts of explicit crimes committed by the occupation authorities in the Crimea against the Crimean Tatars, Ukrainians and all those who continue to bravely oppose the Russian occupation, the report contains a number of specific cases of illegal detention, enforced disappearances and abductions, extrajudicial executions and other violations of fundamental human rights and freedoms.

We proceed from the premises that the report is the first step towards the systematic implementation of the provisions of the UNGA Resolution 71/205, which, together with the GA Resolution 68/262, are the basic documents that confirm the territorial integrity of Ukraine, condemn the temporary occupation the part of Ukraine's territory — AR Crimea and Sevastopol — by the Russian Federation, and they do not recognize the annexation of the peninsula.

We emphasize once again, that only with the comprehensive implementation of the above-mentioned UNGA resolutions and the consolidation of international pressure on Russia as an occupying power, one can achieve a partial improvement of the human rights situation, including the implementation by Russia of the order of the International Court of Justice in case Ukraine vs the Russian Federation regarding the application of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

Ukraine, at all stages of the preparation of the report, supported the OHCHR and the UN Human Rights Mission in Ukraine activities, having spared no effort to ensure that the Mission's experts were able to access the temporarily occupied territory of Crimea. Unfortunately, contrary to the requirements of the Resolution 71/205 and the numerous calls of the international community, this time the Russian Federation has once again ignored the UN mandate. As a result, the UN observers have been prevented from visiting the occupied territory of the peninsula.

Ensuring permanent direct international monitoring of the situation by the existing conventional and institutional mechanisms of the United Nations and other international organizations that, among other factors, will play a role of the control mechanism to monitor Russia's compliance with its obligations as an occupying

power, in accordance with international humanitarian law, remains one of the priorities of the international democratic community.

We call upon the Secretary-General and the High Commissioner of the United Nations to continue their efforts to fully implement Resolution 71/205.

We expect that the international community will continue the systematic pressure on the Russian Federation with the aim to end the violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the illegally occupied Crimea as well as to achieve the de-occupation of the peninsula.